ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

[60] An apparatus and method is provided for facilitating the seamless handoff of IP connections between access routers in an IP network. The mobile IP network includes two or more access routers each serving a different geographic service area. When a mobile terminal moves from the first service area to the second service area, the mobile terminal transmits to the second access router the IP address of the previous access router. The second access router uses this information to learn capabilities of the first access router (e.g., bandwidths supported, security schemes, and the like) for use in future handoff decisions, and exchanges capability information with the first access router. The assumption is made based on the exchanged information that the access routers are geographically proximate. When another mobile terminal transitions from one service area to another, the system selects an optimal target access router based on the previously learned information, including the inferred geographic proximity between access routers.